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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

SECRET

January 4, 1982

NATIONAL SECURITY DECISION
DIRECTIVE NUMBER 18

UNITED STATES CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS ARMS CONTROL POLICY

The President has reviewed the interagency recommendations on United States chemical and biological weapons arms control policy and approves the policies set forth below.

To encourage compliance with the 1975 Biological Weapons Convention and the Geneva Protocol of 1925, the United States will:

(1) Intensify its public information campaign and use the 36th United Nations General Assembly debate, particularly the UN Group of Experts investigating CW use, and debate in the First (Political) Committee on the issue of reports of chemical and toxin weapons use in Afghanistan, Laos, and Kampuchea, as well as discussions in the Committee on Disarmament and other international fora, to continue to expose the chemical and biological warfare activities of the Soviet Union and its associated states to international scrutiny and pressure;

(2) Seek to convene* a meeting of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention with the aim of strengthening its verification and compliance mechanisms in light of probable Soviet non-compliance, and to provide an additional forum for maintaining international pressure on the Soviet Union concerning its chemical and biological warfare activities; and

* The phrase "Seek to convene" represents the policy decision which is required, and is used without prejudice to tactical judgments (i.e., whether the US would propose the meeting or support the Swedish proposal for a meeting of States Parties) to be made once policy approval is obtained.

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Review on December 10, 2001
Extended by J.W. Nance
Reason: NSC 1.13 (d) (e)

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(3) After assessing the results of the steps above, and after evaluating interagency analyses, consider invoking the other two remedies provided by the Biological Weapons Convention:

(a) Taking the issue to the United Nations Security Council, and

(b) As an ultimate step, withdrawing from the Biological Weapons Convention.

To provide the basis for proceeding with the above, the Government is directed to study and submit recommendations on:

-- Specific measures to strengthen the verification and compliance provisions of the Biological Weapons Convention;

-- The relationship of the United States' position on biological warfare to other arms control, East-West and United Nations strategies;

-- Consultations with United States Allies on a strategy in the United Nations and elsewhere; and

-- The legal issues associated with formally charging the Soviet Union with violation of the Biological Weapons Convention.

With respect to chemical weapons arms control, the United States will:

(1) Support the eventual objective of concluding a complete and verifiable prohibition of chemical weapons production, development, and stockpiling, recognizing that for the foreseeable future such a prohibition would be unverifiable by national technical means alone;

(2) Ensure that modernization of short- and long-range chemical weapons systems proceeds so that the United States has a credible and effective deterrent retaliatory capability, and so that the United States can gain negotiating leverage in the area of chemical weapons arms control;

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(3) Allow the United States-Soviet negotiations to lapse informally; and

(4) Support chemical weapons arms control discussions in the Committee on Disarmament leading to multilateral negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament on a chemical weapons prohibition, if further interagency study should support such a step.

In support of United States chemical weapons arms control objectives, the Government is directed to study and, by January 30, 1982, submit recommendations on United States Government positions with respect to:

-- verification;

-- declarations of chemical warfare agent and munitions stocks and production facilities;

-- entry into force;

-- an appropriate public posture with respect to CW arms control;

-- relationship of the United States' position on chemical weapons to other arms control, East-West and United Nations strategies; and

-- consultations with the United States Allies on a strategy in the United Nations and elsewhere.

Ronald Reagan

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